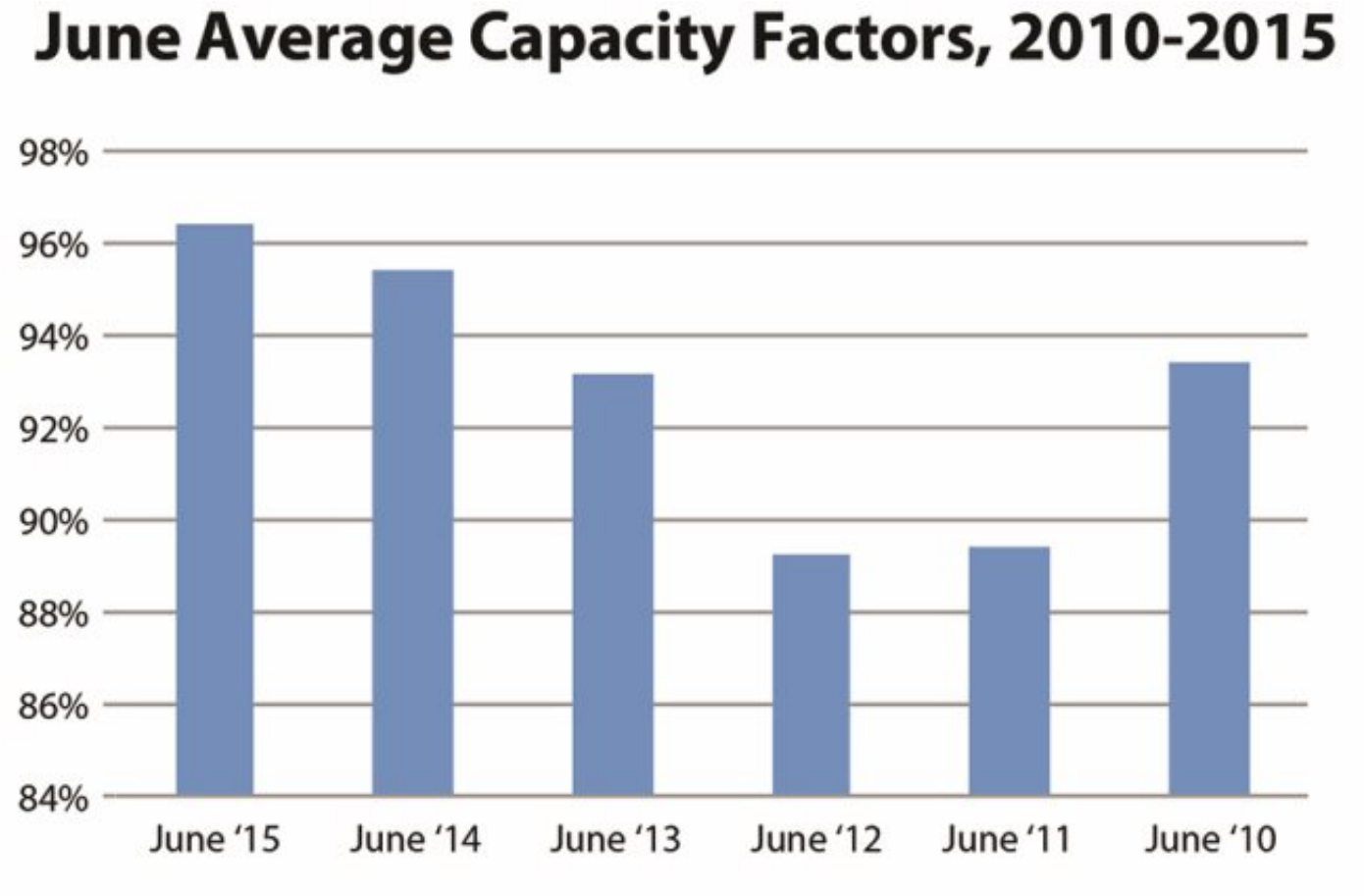
US Nuclear Plants Show Near-Record June Performance

- 96.4 percent average capacity factor best June performance since 2008
- 90 of 99 facilities operated at 90 percent capacity or better
- Near-90 percent averages for more than a decade affirm nuclear energy's reliability

Aug. 13, 2015—U.S. nuclear power plants produced electricity with an average estimated capacity factor in June 2015 of 96.4 percent, the highest number in the past six years. The figure compares to 95.4 percent last June, and is 7 percent higher than the 89.2 percent performance achieved in June 2012.

Ninety of the 99 U.S. nuclear reactors ran at a 90 percent capacity or higher in June, while 62 reactors ran at 100 percent or higher.



Source: Calculated from U.S. Energy Information Administration and Nuclear Regulatory Commission data.

Capacity factor compares the amount of electricity a power plant produces over a given period to the maximum it could produce at continuous full power operation during the same period. Reactors running at 100 percent capacity, for example, are operating nonstop and at full power over the period measured.

According to NEI's most recent Nuclear Performance Report, estimated U.S. nuclear generation for the month was 68.5 billion kilowatt-hours, compared to 68.1 billion kWh in June 2014.

Capacity factors are generally higher in the summer and winter peak demand seasons as nuclear plant operators schedule refueling and maintenance outages during the off-peak seasons. U.S. nuclear power plants are some of the best-performing in the world. According to Platts' Megawatt Daily's June 22 report, Arizona

Public Service's 1,405-megawatt Palo Verde 3 was the second highest generator of electricity worldwide in 2014, producing 12.2 billion kWh and posting an annual capacity factor of 97.5 percent. STP Nuclear Operating Co.'s 1,312-MW South Texas 2 was in third place, generating 12.19 billion kWh and obtaining the highest capacity factor, of more than 100 percent.